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# The New Dispensation.

Y o g a :

OR

Communion with God.

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## Yoga ; or Communion with God.

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**Y**OGA represents one of the most prominent aspects of Hindu devotional life, and is a remarkably unique type of Eastern faith, unlike anything we see in the devotion or discipline of the Churches in the West. It is a stumbling-block to modern scientists and philosophers. To the Christian rationalist it is heathenism and foolishness. That there are errors and hallucinations mixed up with Hindu yoga cannot be denied. Even the staunchest supporters cannot fail to see in its extreme forms a great deal that is unphilosophical and unjustifiable. But it is not with extremes or abuses that we have to deal. The philosophical thinker has to deal with the essence of things apart from mere accidents. Not to be able to separate the two argues either prejudice or intellectual obtuseness, which must seriously incapacitate a critic from passing an impartial verdict.

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He who means to do justice to the religious life of this ancient and great nation, the Hindus, must look beneath the surface of things, and seize the essential principles which underlie it. Let us inquire dispassionately into the real meaning and character of yoga, as ingrained in the national life of the Hindu race, and manifested in various forms in different conditions and periods of its mental development.

### What it Means.



WHAT does yoga literally mean? Union. The English word which makes the nearest approach to it is Communion. The created soul, in its worldly and sinful condition, lives separate and estranged from the Supreme Soul. A reconciliation is needed; nay, more than mere reconciliation. A harmonious union is sought and realized. This union with Deity is the real secret of Hindu yoga. It is spiritual unification; it is a consciousness of two in one; duality in unity. To the philosophical and thoughtful Hindu, this is the highest heaven. He pants for no other salvation; he seeks no other *mukti* or deliverance. Separation, disunion, estrangement, a sense of distinction, duality, the pride of ego, this is to him the root of all sin and suffering; and the only heaven he aspires to is conscious union and oneness with Deity. He is ever struggling and striving to attain this blessed condition of divine humanity. Once in possession of it, he is above all sorrow and distraction, sin and impurity, and he feels all is serene and tranquil within. All his devotions and prayers, his

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rites and ceremonies, his meditations and his self-denials are but means and methods which help him on to this heaven of peace.

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### Three Kinds of Yoga.—A Trinity.

**I**N three different periods this spirit of yoga, this communion with God, naturally assumes three different forms, or strictly speaking, is realized in three different ways. We see in the earliest, or Vedic period, communion with God in Nature; this is objective yoga. Then we have in the Vedantic period communion with God in the soul; this is subjective yoga. Thirdly, in the Puranic period we find communion with God in History or with the God of Providence; this is Bhakti, or Bhakti yoga. A little reflection will discover an analogy at once striking and suggestive. Here, in Hindu theology, is a trinity which manifests a wonderful family likeness to the Christian Trinity. The only difference is in the order of development. In all other respects the coincidence of idea and sentiment is most remarkable. In Christianity we have the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; in Hinduism we have the Father, the Holy Spirit and, then the Son. These three ideas represent the different modes of divine manifestation, and characterize three distinct periods in the history

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'of Hinduism. How naturally they follow one another in the course of human development, both in the individual and the community, and how, in modified forms, they recur in cycles in the world's history, we need not stop to consider.

### Genesis of Vedic Yoga.



THE soul of man first seeks God in Nature. His earliest theology is the knowledge of Nature or natural theology. His earliest devotion is the worship of Nature. He is just ushered into the physical world, and he is at once struck with the wonders of creation. Everything he sees fills him with astonishment. Not only is the universe grand and beautiful—with its sun, moon and stars, its hills, rivers and seas, its minerals, trees and animals—but Nature moves and lives and grows. Hence is nature not only a marvel but a deep mystery. Whence these movements of planetary bodies, of winds and rivers? asks the wondering soul. Whence all this growth of animal and vegetable life in all their wondrous variety, symmetry and beauty? Who or what can this Great Mystery be that moves and animates the universe? Struck with awe and astonishment, man bows and prostrates himself, and adores, worships, praises and magnifies—what? He cannot tell. He is too young and unintelligent, too simple and uncultured to be able to explain what it is he worships. He is led by



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instinct and intuition, not by reason or reflection. He has only crude ideas to which science has not yet given a definite shape. He acts under the influence of emotions and impulses, but cannot render an account of his own thoughts or actions. He is religious, but not theological. He worships anything and everything that excites in him wonder, reverence or gratitude. He bows reverently before the high heavens, and offers prayer and praise to thunder, lightning and rain. To the sun and fire, to the winds and the rivers he offers his heart's warmest thanksgivings as to his best benefactors. The morning is beautiful and charming, and he adores it without a moment's hesitation. Surya, Indra, Váyu, Varuna,—all these he invokes and worships.

### Neither Pantheism nor Polytheism.



ARE we then to look upon him as a pantheist? Or is he a polytheist? Neither the one nor the other. His faith and devotions have not assumed any definite theological form, and would not admit of being ranked under any recognized groups. Scientific arrangement and philosophical precision are not possible where only the crudest thoughts and the mere germs of instinct life are observable. The earliest morn is neither night nor day. Embryonic existence is neither matter nor mind. So, perhaps, it is with the earliest religious life of humanity. It is what it is, and we must take it as it is. The philosopher may naturally feel anxious to give it a name. But things are not always what we wish them to be. Let the fastidious and impatient critic suspend his judgment, and not be eager to vilify man's religious infancy as pantheism or polytheism. Let him only interpret Nature, and faithfully represent her, and not give her a name with a view to abuse her. The real truth is that this instinctive worship of Nature is neither pantheism nor polytheism, but the mere

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worship of force. A mysterious Something—science calls it force—the devout Aryan recognizes behind the great movement of the physical universe ; a ruling Force behind each department of Nature, a Force in each stupendous object, in each wondrous movement in creation. The various forces in Nature—sun force, rain force, wind force, water force, fire force—were worshipped separately by different votaries, or the same votary at different times and on different occasions, as diverse objects in creation excited wonder or riveted the heart's interest. For the time each seemed a gigantic and mighty Force, before which everything else sank into insignificance, and which completely absorbed the mind and monopolized the devotion of the votary. Thus each Vedic Rishi extolled his own god above all the other gods. And thus each god became for a time the supreme deity, and all the gods by turn acquired ascendancy as the paramount and primary creative force. There was evidently no pre-meditated plan of graduated divinities in the Vedic pantheon ; no fixed order of precedence. There was even no attempt to decide whether the

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universe had one God or many gods. Now we are told the gods are many ; now we are told it is one God, but represented as many.

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## Force-Worship in Modern Science,— A Paralell.



SCIENCE is also the deliverance of modern science. A Huxley and a Tyndall have discovered nothing in natural phenomena beyond the Mystery of Force. It is either one unknown force, or many cognizable forces supposed to be resolvable into a primitive and primary force. Like modern scientists, the Vedic Rishis also seized only permanent forces behind shifting phenomena; and even grouped in different classes and designated under different names the ruling forces in different departments of nature. There is, however, this difference between the ancient Rishis and the scientists of the present day. Among the former we see devotion and poetry; among the latter agnosticism and philosophy. The Rishis were Nature's poets, overflowing with imagination and gushing sentiment. How dry, unimaginative, cold and undevout the votaries of protoplasm and evolution! Why is this so? The Rishis, simple and childlike, went far beyond the Huxleys and Tyndalls of our day in their search after the Unknown. They stopped


not at dead material force, like modern pilgrims of science, but went further and reached the Temple of Living Personal Force. They adored Fire-force ; not an idol, but the burning capacity of fire, and yet they recognized and revered it as a person. They paid homage to Water ; but Water to them was a personal deity, who could hear and grant prayers. They addressed Usha, or Morn, as a female divinity full of beauty. Personal Fire, personal Water, personal Morning ! Inexplicable anomalies, revolting polytheism, degrading worship, —some would say. No. They are Mysteries, it is true ; and perfectly unintelligible and even obnoxious to the rationalist ; but to the spiritual man they are the mysteries of transcendental devotion and yoga. To personify a piece of stone or a tree, to convert a figure of clay into a personal divinity, is no doubt idolatry, pure and simple. To see only matter and matter-force everywhere is agnosticism and atheism. But to discover an efficient and personal First Cause in all natural phenomena is the highest causal intuition of philosophical Theism. It is the germ of scientific yoga vision. The discovery

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is not the result of laborious logical processes, inductive or deductive. The efficient cause is also a personal cause; so says the intuitive consciousness in man; the two are apprehended simultaneously—efficiency and personality—in one and the same act of cognitive perception.

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### Recognition of Personality.

VIDENTLY the Rishi, in recognizing personal Force, argued not from premise to conclusion ; he inferred not personality from a blind force. His was no inferential theology, His Storm-god and his Fire-god were at once causal forces, intelligent beings and loving persons. As the clouds thundered and discharged electricity and poured down rains, he wondered, bowed and prayed ; he spoke to One he knew not, but recognized as a Father and a Friend, a person who knew him, and was ready to protect and deliver him. Can man love fire and water ? Can man trust and adore the sun and the sky ? Can man affectionately address the flowing rivers as mothers ? The Aryan devotee did. His eyes untutored, yet trained, saw a Person behind all the wonders and beauties of creation, and therefore, he believed, trusted, loved and adored all at once. A Presence, the presence of a Lord and Friend, confronted him everywhere. At every turn he met a holy and divine Person. In fire, in water, in all things, above and below, he seemed to realize this Omnipresent and Omniactive.



Person. In all departments of Nature he saw a Person, who was infinite in power and intelligence and compassion. It was a besetting force, an all-seeing witness, an ever-present father, a most loving mother, and a holy Saviour who delivered man from sin. Where others saw only a blind mechanical force, the Rishi beheld a Person sitting in glory and quickening and regulating the universe. They stuck at the veil, and saw nothing behind ; but he saw through it, and found his trusted Friend. He had the gift of interpenetration. The force-wall of Nature's cathedral is opaque to the ordinary eye ; but to the spiritual eye of yoga it is transparent. Hence the Rishi saw, through the diversified forms of gross matter, the presence of a resplendent Person. Such God-vision is possible only to the favored eye of the yogi. Or why is it that everybody does not enjoy it ? Everybody sees the sun, moon and stars ; water and fire are objects of daily observations. Yet how few there are who intuitively and with the enthusiasm of spontaneous reverence recognize a personal divinity in these material objects ! Nature is before us, above us and around us, day

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and night we all see it, and yet so few seem privileged to see *through* it, and discover the Supreme Person behind it. Even the scientists of the present age, who are ever handling various objects in Nature and most industriously manipulating and analyzing them with a view to ascertain their nature and properties, seem unable to recognize anything beyond matter and material force. But the uncultured Aryan, innocent of modern philosophy and science, clearly saw a Person where others dimly see mere force enveloped in mists. Are we not, then, warranted in pronouncing him a seer and a yogi? Surely this is yoga vision, though not in its more perfect form. It is more poetical than philosophical, more mystical than scientific, more a matter of faith than of reason or thought.

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### Yoga Normal.



ET it is most natural and real. On analysis and examination it will be found to be a sound mental process, quite capable of psychological verification. Far from being an exceptional or accidental phenomenon of deranged minds, a phantasm or fancy of excited enthusiasts, it is a fact of normal consciousness, realizable under similar conditions of thought and attested by the universal experience of the spiritually-minded. In moments of devotional excitement and profound meditation, men of faith, in all ages and climes, vividly realized the presence of God in the material universe. In this state of mind they stand awe-struck, and overpowered by a peculiar emotion which can hardly be described before this Spirit's Presence in nature. When it comes, how it comes, they know not. It seems to be a mystery of faith, but it is a fact, nevertheless. What happens in a small measure to ordinary humanity bursts like a flood of light upon great geniuses. It is the same thing, only in astonishing profusion. Two instances, exceptionally striking, will suffice for illustration.

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**Moses.**

ISTORY tells us that when Moses was summoned up to mountain heights to receive his commission, he saw Jehovah in the "burning bush," and he bowed before Him. He did not adore the bush, nor was the fire in the bush his idol. Moses hated idolatry. But he saw his Jehovah, the real Almighty Jehovah of the universe, in that little burning bush. It was neither idolatry nor pantheism; it was neither madness nor delusion; it was no logical inference. It was pure yoga vision. Like a true yogi, he looked at the burning bush; the light of inspiration flashed upon his eyes and his heart, and where others saw but a bush in flame he beheld the person of Jehovah. Was it a material form, a visible and tangible figure? Jehovah was spirit, and Moses beheld his Spirit-God ablaze in the burning bush. . And when the spirit sees Spirit, it is nothing but yoga perception. Alas! how few in this age possess or exercise this higher faculty of spiritual vision, and realize their God in nature!

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*Jesus.*

COMING down to the New Testament we find another remarkable instance of spiritual vision. When Jesus came out of the waters of the Jôrdan "in which he was baptized," he beheld a strange transfiguration in the sky above. The heavens were opened, and a dove was hovering overhead, in which was the Holy Ghost. What a blessed sight did the Son of God see immediately after baptism! In any other man such a thing would be put down as a dream or an imposture. But was Jesus a dreamer or a deceiver? The Son of God was a transcendental spiritualist, a yogi of yogis. He never indulged in dreams. He actually saw with the divine eye of yoga an opening heaven and a descending Divinity. And where did he see these? In the material sky, and in an ordinary little bird, fluttering in the air. The sky is but sky, mere empty space to the uninitiated eye of ordinary mortals, and a dove is but a bird, and nothing more. But Christ's baptized eye did not see matter, but saw through matter. The sky above threw off its material veil, and the effulgence of heaven shone

forth; and the dove became so spiritualized, and so transparent that Christ saw in it, and through it the person of the Holy Ghost. To the spiritual all things are spiritual; to the divine eye all things reveal divinity. To see in an instant the very God of the universe in a flying bird not only as an inspiring vital force, but as a blazing personal Divinity, is a feat of spiritual perception to which only the Son of God was equal. He showed us in perfection what we all can, but imperfectly, achieve with our little eye of faith. He has told us by his example, far more eloquent and impressive than words can be, that, when baptized and inspired, every man of faith ought to be able to see God in nature as he did. What a precious legacy has Jesus left to us in this grand symbolic rite of baptism! The whole picture of that great event still glows before us, and rebukes our materialism and "little faith." The Indians read it and interpret it thus—says Jesus to the unbelieving and the unclean world, "be so thoroughly baptized that the soul may become quite a new man and with new eyes see Divinity in nature. Believe me, I actually *saw* the Holy Spirit." So,

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shall every man who is truly baptized and regenerated, see Him. I was one with God in yoga, and was absorbed in His all-pervading and inspiring presence as soon as the rite of baptism was administered, and so shall every son of man be when he is born of the Spirit." We cannot but look upon Christ's baptism as an example, and a pattern of what humanity is capable of, and a command to "go and do likewise."

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**Yoga to be Cultivated, not Despised.**

IN the light of Judaism, in the light of Christianity, then let us study and comprehend the real meaning of that elementary and crude communion with God in nature which prevailed in India during the Vedic period, and which universal experience and the corroborative testimony of Saints have verified as a fact of normal consciousness. Let us not ridicule or despise it as an old and exploded delusion of oriental mysticism, but let us establish it upon a strictly and scientific basis with the aid of modern philosophy. Let us dissociate it from all that is local, accidental and national, free it from all impure admixtures which have encrusted round it and given it a pantheistic or a polytheistic look, and let us refine and perfect it into a pure Theistic and universal principle, applicable to all nations alike. Let us abandon all attempts at mere theorising and speculating about its vexed metaphysics, and treat it as a subject of practical importance in which we are all deeply interested, and let each of us assiduously cultivate it in daily life. Whether in the shady groves or on



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the snow-clad hill tops of India, or amid the incessant activities of manufacture, commerce and politics in Western countries, every man of faith, Asiatic, European or American, ought to cultivate the science of yoga, and there can be no doubt that a glorious harvest will be, the reward of such culture.





## Vedic or Objective Yoga :

### Its Nature and Process.

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**W**HAT this objective yoga or communion with nature's God is, what are its essential characteristics, its moral effects on life, and how it breathes sanctity and joy into the heart, will be rendered evident to every believer, when he actually tries to realize it in his own consciousness, according to strict scientific rules, and under proper logical tests. A faithful anatomy of the optics of yoga will no doubt clear up a great deal of mystery, remove misconception, and may even induce faith. Let us fancy a scientific yogi of the nineteenth century, freed from all superstition and versed in modern philosophy, quietly meditating on the works of nature. No disturbing thoughts, no harrassing cares of the world.

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hinder the concentration of his mind. His whole attention is directed to the objects that surround him and excite his interest. The mind roams with delight from object to object in nature, gazing now at a beautiful rose, now at a huge tree, a smiling field, a flowing brook, a stupendous hill, a singing bird, the deep blue sea, or the azure sky above. And at last absorbed and entranced, he asks,—whence this beauty, this order and regularity, this growth and movement in nature? What is it, who is it that sustains and quickens the universe? Suddenly he starts, and almost instinctively he seizes the efficient cause, the prime force which is in all and through all. This cognition of force is immediate and intuitive, and yet he feels that here faith and science harmonize, the seer and the scientist are one.

But this force that so vividly bursts upon his earliest vision is a force in which all that is in the effect is summed up as in the primitive cause,—power, intelligence, love and beauty. He beholds a person at once true, good and beautiful. He sees himself and the universe, the me and the not-me, living and moving in a central will-force,

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in an intelligent and loving personality. And as his cognitive faculties apprehend this almighty, all-wise and all-good person, his heart overflows with emotions, and gratitude, trust, reverence, wonder, love, joy and enthusiasm all surge up and make his vision sweet indeed. All this takes place instantly. Faith, intellect and feeling form in a moment one eye as it were, and the observer observes with scientific accuracy, with firm faith and with abounding joy. Such God-consciousness grows in vividness and joy as the mind is more and more concentrated in it, till it becomes quite absorbing. All the massive doors of the universe are now flung open. Hills and rivers, trees and flowers, sun and moon and stars, wind and rain, fire and lightning, insect, bird, beast and man, all open up their inner sanctuary, and the Living Force appears in all things. Every object, every being seems to be a temple of Jehovah, great or small. The temple doors, hitherto closed, are suddenly unlocked as if by magic influence, and the Deity within shines upon the devout eye of the observer. A thick curtain hitherto hung over the face of the universe and

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veiled all its wondrous secrets. Anon, the curtain rolls up, and the veiled God is at once unveiled before the clear vision of the yogi. The observer and the observed, the subject and the object, the soul and All-soul, the son and the Father hitherto stood separated, and nature intervened as a heavy stone wall. Man knew his God but obscurely, and sent up his prayers and supplications to His unknown residence in far away cloudlands. The devotee, with all his theology and devotion, stood myriads of miles away from the object of his adoration, and though he loved Him and trusted Him, he was nevertheless a stranger who had never seen his Maker. He knew that God was nature's God, and was manifest in the works of His own hand ; but whenever he approached Him, these very works shut Him up, and while they revealed their own glory and beauty, their law and the wonders of their economy, they enveloped their Maker in absolute darkness. He never could see or speak to his God face to face. If he had a message to send, he had to trust nature's wire to carry it to the unknown house of the unknown God. He was sure his Father was in the temple of

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the universe. But *cui bono* ? The gate was always closed. Here was man crawling on the earth, there was God hid in infinity behind nature. The two were an estranged and disunited duality. The material universe, with its vast array of physical forces intervened and obstructed union. Now that the eye of the scientific observer has been quickened and opened by yoga, he at once removes the obstruction, pulls down the barrier, and advances to his God unimpeded. A Divinity cognized mediately is now perceived immediately. An absent God is now a present God. The separated two thus stand before each other face to face. Then union takes place through spiritual affinity as they approach and flow into each other. At first there is mutual attraction, then communion, then intercommunion, then absorption. Constant intercourse consolidates union, and makes it more real and sweet, till at last the bond of union becomes indissoluble. Now the yogi lives perpetually, as it were, in a flood of Divine light, his hand always in the hands of the loving Father, his eye always fixed on His all-seeing eye. Every object opens a passage to God, and

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all nature affords facilities for the most rapid pilgrimage to His immediate presence. The devotee goes through the sun and the moon into his God, and his God comes into him through the sun and the moon. The obstructive medium having been completely removed, the freest communication with heaven is established, and an unconditional passport through any road, however apparently impassable, is secured. The yogi's eye moves right and left, runs east, west, north and south, dashing through infinite space, and through every object, every force, every law in nature, meets his omnipresent King, and becomes one with Him. Steam and electricity, light and heat directly reveal Him. The force of gravitation is only a beautiful vista through which He is described. The laboratory and the observatory, the museum and the dissecting room are aglow with His presence. The microscope and the telescope, like sacred eyes, reveal new worlds of beauty. Every department of physical science becomes a high road to the temple of the great Jehovah. When the yogi scientist observes the rolling planets above, as an astronomer from his high observatory, every

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discovery he makes leads him into the very bosom of that Mighty Architect, who holds those stupendous orbs in His right hand. When he watches the movements of the winds as a meteorologist, he distinctly feels in them the breath of Him who rides on the whirlwind and shakes the universe by His power. The more he studies the mathematics and the mechanics of physical forces, the more vividly does he see the great Mathematician and Mechanic who has constructed this wondrous mechanism. And if as a botanist or as a physiologist he deals with the countless forms of vegetable and animal life, his mind runs through all creature-life into the primary vitality of the living God. Thus, through every department of science he glides almost unconsciously into the immediate presence of the person whom he recognizes and adores as the Creator of the universe. The universe is the Holy of Holies in which he always adores the omnipresent and omniactive God of Natural Theology. In his studies, his thoughts, his observations and his devotions, he feels he is constantly encompassed by the presence of this science-God, with which he is now so thoroughly



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identified in spirit as to form an inseparable union. The fiction of an unknown or distant or sleeping Divinity has completely disappeared, and the living God of science brightens the whole universe. The true votary of science beholds everywhere the God of astronomy, the God of meteorology, the God of chemistry, the God of geology, the God of physiology, and the God of medicine, and enters into deep communion with Him. He sees before him the God of electricity and magnetism, the God of winds and tides, the God of light and sound, the God of eclipses and comets; the God of engineering and navigation, the God of agriculture and manufacture. And as he sees and adores his God in particular objects, he magnifies the Supreme as sun-God, or as moon-God, as rain-God or fire-God, as hill-God or sea-God, as harvest-God or dollar-God. The burning presence of the Divine Person makes all matter divine, and converts the whole universe into a vast "burning bush." And thus God-absorbed Rishis, whether of the old or the modern school, eastern or western, baptize themselves in divine water and feed on divine bread, see, hear and touch divinity in all

things, recognize divine science in all knowledge, walk with a divine Friend, and rejoice ever in a Father's sweet and ever-present reality. They see "all in God and God in all." In this state of absorbing yoga, disunion is impossible. The yogi is so perfectly one with his God, that he cannot think Him away from himself or the universe. Separation is not merely a religious difficulty or a devotional discomfort, but a psychological impossibility. God-consciousness becomes so overpowering at last that man lives perpetually in the presence of his Father, and finds it absolutely impossible to tear himself away from it. Association which makes dissociation an impossibility is the height of yoga communion. How happy are they who have obtained this high state of spiritual culture through the grace of God, for they behold a resplendent Light, a mighty Force, and an intelligent and loving Personality everywhere. Such is objective yoga; such its God-vision and such its joys.





## Vedantic or Subjective, Yoga : Its Nature and Process.

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**T**HE Vedic period was followed by the Vedantic. During this period we find the Hindu mind retreating from, external nature into the inner world. Not observation, but introspection, not the objective but the subjective is now the watchword of Aryan theology. The child has gradually passed into adolescence and youth, and entered the domain of thought. The Rishi is no longer impulsive and poetical, but sedate and philosophical. His spontaneous God-consciousness has developed into reflective God-consciousness. He has done with the outside world; he has gathered all the materials furnished by the senses. Now he must philosophise and reflect. He must now account for his faith; he

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must now convert his religion into theology. Accordingly we find in the second period elaborate and thoughtful treatises on the nature and attributes of God, known as the Upanishads. These Upanishads are also called the Vedanta, the *anta* or end of the Vedas. In other words, they are an exposition of the true scope and meaning of the Vedas. They are the philosophy of Vedic religion. We no longer see the Vedic Rishi adoring and magnifying the objects in nature, and reverently singing their merits. We now see the Vedantic sage absorbed in contemplation, and cultivating the deepest communion with the Supreme Spirit with closed eyes. The Vedic poet was all objective; external nature was his road to the Deity. The Vedantist is all subjective; his way to the unseen lies through the depths of his inner nature. His is the higher order of yoga; nay, his is yoga strictly so called, for he seeks no external medium or help and wholly withdraws from matter. He simply unites spirit with Spirit, the little self with the Great Self. Like his Vedic forefather, he too has his errors. If the Vedic worshipper sometimes ran,

too far towards Nature-worship, the Vedantic philosopher is at times carried away by extreme subjectivity into the vortex of pantheism. And as we have expounded and justified the essence of the objective yoga of the Vedas, so is it possible to vindicate the true essence of the subjective yoga of the Vedanta. Let us proceed to unravel the mystery of this inner communion, and drag into light what really transpires in the consciousness of the subjective yogi.

He who seeks this higher communion with the Divine Spirit and desires to be one with Him, retires from the din and bustle, the temptations and fears of the world, and gives himself up to solitude and silence. From all sensible objects and from all temporal thoughts and cares he tries to draw his heart away, that he may by perfect concentration fix his attention immovably in the Eternal Spirit. By continued watchfulness and struggle he gradually becomes master of himself and rigidly controls all his thoughts and desires. He finds that desire is his great enemy, and self the formidable partition-wall which separates him from his God. Every impure wish hinders con-

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centration, and the pride of self, ever and anon, proves a disturbing element. Self-will is the arch enemy of communion, and this he tries to annihilate. In objective yoga matter is the great obstruction; as soon as that is removed, the soul and Divinity become one. In subjective yoga, self is the impediment; remove that, and man is one with God. This self-abnegation is not merely self-denial or asceticism in the ordinary sense of the term. It is not merely the renunciation of carnal pleasures and temporal enjoyments. It is not even the highest form of poverty. It is not mere sackcloth and ashes. It is something more. The sacrifice it enjoins is far more radical and deep. It is the sacrifice not of self-interest or selfishness or self-glorification or self-indulgence, but of self itself. The yogi hates self as an abomination and an evil in itself. He would lay the axe at the root, and is not content with lopping off the branches of the tree of corruption. Anger, lust, covetousness, pride, envy, worldliness, all these he would put away, because they obstruct his devotion and concentration, and turn him away from the Supreme. But in doing

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so, his *modus operandi* is of a singularly radical type. His process is not to destroy each passion by moral struggle and warfare, but to root out self, the origin of all evil, by spiritual absorption in the Higher Self. Instead of confronting single foes and vanquishing special vices, he goes valiantly into the very heart of the enemy's citadel, and tries to overthrow it completely. His ethics is not negative and destructive, but positive and constructive. His ideal of moral and spiritual perfection is not No-sin, No-sensuality, No-worldliness, No-pride, but positive Goldliness. He seeks not retirement from the world, but admission into heaven. He will have no other salvation than the absorption of I, Mine, and Me in the Godhead. And this absorption he endeavours to bring about by constant contemplation. So thoroughly does he concentrate his attention in the reality of the Infinite Spirit, that his little unreal self gradually wanes and fades away, like the borrowed and reflected radiance of the moon before the rising sun. When the real comes, the unreal disappears. It is quite clear now that there is no power in self but it is of God ; no wisdom, no love, no holiness, but it is Divine.

Such regenerating communion who can despise? Who would not sacrifice and extinguish his carnal self and put on a new and Divine life? Shall we be content with merely reforming the old man and embellishing him with what the world calls virtue? Should we not rather put away the old man completely and put on Divinity? Shall we eternally worship the Deity from a distance? Shall we not rather hold deep communion with Him face to face, and live in Him wherever we may happen to be, and however employed we may be in the varied fields of daily duty? We need not go into forests or mountain caverns, as many an ancient Aryan Vedantist did, for the purpose of cultivating such communion. We need not forsake family and friends and renounce domestic and social obligations in order to find the Infinite in the solitude and silence of hermit life. Let us be where we are, each at his post as assigned by God, and amid the multifarious engagements and the arduous struggles of life, in the midst of society and home, let us realize an inseparable spirit-union with the Supreme by attuning our will to His. Let it be remembered that true sub-



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jective yoga is not the imagining away of self, nor the sentimental absorption of the soul in an imaginary deity of extreme sweetness. It is the moral union of humanity with Divinity in truth and holiness. If such be true yoga, surely it becomes us, no less than Vedantists of old, to study and practise it. How very lofty and holy, how serene and joyful is the condition of the yogi's soul, when fully entranced he sees God in himself and himself in God. Let us look into the beatific condition of his soul.

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### Its Nature.



ALL is tranquil. The eyes are closed, and all communication with the visible world is at an end. Distracting thoughts have been banished, and there is a perfect cessation of care and anxiety. The soul is solitary, still and serene. The world's clamour, the heart's clamour is hushed, and nothing breaks the profound silence, nothing ruffles the tranquility of the inmost soul. The inner chamber is dark as darkness; not an object is to be seen. Nothing seems to exist now but proud and godless self. This obstructive and opaque, though unreal, self confronts the yogi on all sides. Avaunt, says he, thou apparition, thou fatal illusion, parent of all evil, thou unwelcome intruder, away. I want thee not, for thou art unreal, and my arch-enemy art thou. Where thou abidest, the Supreme comes not. Therefore be gone. Deadliest enemy, get thee behind me. Before the yogi's thundering voice and before the lightning flash of his eyes self vanishes away. Anon the Infinite bursts upon his view. He shines as something awfully real, a burning reality. From the depths of his

being this Presence surges up as the fountain of vitality. From above, it descends like a continued shower of heavenly inspiration. From all sides it draws near as the presence of one who is nearest and dearest. Deeper insight makes the Revelation brighter, and this presence sweeter. The more the yogi looks at this reality, the more distinctly does he trace its essential features and characteristics. A mere presence is soon transformed into a Person, all whose attributes, so far as they are visible to human ken, are plainly and clearly perceived. Here is Intelligence, seen by the eye of reason; there Love which the eye of love apprehends; here Holiness, revealed to the eye of conscience; and there in the centre Will-force or Personality, in which all these attributes inhere. As the eye to light and the ear to sound are by nature mysteriously linked, so the various organs of the self-bereft soul at once and naturally unite with their corresponding attractions in the Infinite Soul. As yoga ripens and develops, these spiritbonds become tighter and draw the Infinite more and more into the finite soul. Gradually the Almighty overpowers the yogi's little

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soul, the All-wise confounds his wisdom, the All-merciful carries away his love the All-holy dazzles his conscience. Thus overpowered, captivated and entranced, the devotee looks more steadily at this God-presence, and he soon finds beauty ineffable, beaming forth from the countenance of this peculiarly attractive Person. Whatever or whoever he may be—who knows? He is indeed a graceful Person, a sweet moral Being, a joyous Spirit. If He confounds us by His greatness, and dazzles us by His holiness, which myriads of suns cannot equal, He is also a charming sight, a gladdening Presence, a serenity and a sweetness surpassing myriads of lunar orbs. Father and Mother, Friend and Guide, Teacher and Saviour, Comforter and Gladdener, are all combined in this one Person, and if there is any such thing as spiritual smile, the sweetest and the loveliest smile plays on the lips of this supremely beautiful Person. He is moral beauty in perfection. And His word, that inspires and enlightens, is moral music in perfection. Who that has seen that beauty can forget it? Who that has listened to that sweet voice in conscience can turn away from it? Who that has

tasted the nectar of that delicious Presence can lay aside the sweet cup? None. In deepest yoga the soul is completely enraptured. In God the yogi has sunk deep, never to rise again. Even if he would, he cannot snatch himself away from the Father's embrace, which has taken firm hold on him for time and eternity. He is associated permanently with the Eternal, and even when there is no actual contemplation or solitary communion, even when life is flung into the most stirring activity or the sorest trial, his yoga knows no "bi-yoga," his union knows no disunion. When once the Lord has been established in the soul by repeated yoga exercises, He abides ever in mind and heart, in soul and body, and in all the details of daily life as a besetting and a fragrant reality. Moral purity and moral peace breathe perfume over the whole of the yogi's life; and his thoughts and words and deeds are redolent of Divine sweetness. Living always in the immediate presence of his God, he is filled more and more with the inspiration of Heaven, till all that was his is washed away, and all that is of God becomes his. This abiding union is life eternal, this is the high-

est heaven the true devotee pants after. May the joy and the sanctity and the blessedness of this communion burst upon the nineteenth century like a flood of life and light !



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